

“The regime is at its end and its leaders are either dead, have surrendered or are on the run,” said Pentagon spokeswoman Torie Clarke at a recent press briefing.

Clarke also gave a progress report on the eight objectives of Operation Iraqi Freedom. The first was to eliminate the regime of Saddam Hussein, and Iraq is currently free of his influence. The second was to drive out terrorist organizations sheltered by Iraq. Clarke said that with the fall of Saddam, terrorists have lost their support. Collecting intelligence was the third objective, and Iraqis are bringing information to coalition forces.

Clarke said the fourth and fifth objectives concerned weapons of mass destruction. She added that suspect sites are being investigated and Iraqis are being encouraged to provide relevant information. The sixth is to secure Iraqi oil fields, which has been accomplished. The seventh is to end United Nations sanctions imposed against Iraq after the 1991 Gulf War and to begin sending humanitarian aid. The eighth goal is to help Iraq establish a representative government that doesn't threaten its neighbors, which is what coalition forces are assisting with at this time. — Jim Garamone, American Forces Press Service

OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM



A soldier guards the entrance to a Baghdad power plant on April 21, the day Iraqi engineers started a steam turbine there that would eventually provide power to the city.

AP Photo/Dusan Vranic



OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM

(Right) SPC Zachariah Johnson of the Army Reserve's 431st Civil Affairs Battalion meets a young Iraqi.

(Below, right) U.S. Central Command commander GEN Tommy Franks tours one of Saddam Hussein's palaces in Baghdad.

(Bottom) A plume of smoke, framed by a bullet-shattered window, rises on the Baghdad skyline.

(Below) 1LT Patrick Pray of Task Force 2-69 Armor pages through an Iraqi propaganda leaflet at a former elementary school.

PFC James Matise



SPC Adam Nuelken



SFC David Dismukes



SPC Adam Nuelken







(Above) CPT Bert LaCroix of the 411th Civil Affairs Bn. pours rice into a bag for a resident of Khan Ar Rabbah.

(Far right, top) LTG Jay Garner (Ret.), head of the civilian administration in Iraq, is greeted in Baghdad by MG Glen Webster.

(Far right, bottom) Soldiers of 3rd Bn., 187th Inf., play soccer with a local boy outside a Baghdad mosque.

(Right, middle) A photo of a 101st Abn. Div. soldier's girlfriend stays close and safe — inside his Kevlar helmet.

(Right) An elderly man sits beneath a pro-American slogan painted on a wall in the northern Iraqi city of Kirkuk.



AP Photo/Kevin Frayer



Operation Iraqi Freedom

SSG Eric Foltz



AP Photo/Odd Anderson/Pool



SPC Robert Woodward



SPC Robert Woodward



OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM



AP Photo/Kevin Frayer

(Clockwise, from right):

SGM Charles Smith of the 308th CA Bn. administers first aid to an Iraqi boy who'd fallen and cut his head near An Najaf.

SGT Michael Bush, a 101st Abn. Div. medic, hands boxes of medicine to workers in an Iraqi medical clinic.

BG Steven Hawkins, commander of an Army engineer task force, shakes hands with an Iraqi engineer during a visit to a Baghdad power plant.

LTC Randy Stagner of the 308th CA Bn. presents two Iraqi children with a humanitarian daily ration pack near An Najaf.

CPT Tom Roughneen smiles as he greets a newly baptized baby at the Catholic cathedral in Kirkuk.

MSG Christopher Calkins




AP Photo/Brennan Linsley





MSG Christopher Calkins

AMERICA

AND THE WAR ON TERRORISM

 The days of repression of the Iraqi people are over, said President George W. Bush to a group of Iraqi expatriates in Dearborn, Mich. "People who live in Iraq deserve the same freedom that you and I enjoy here in America," he said. "And after years of tyranny and torture, that freedom has finally arrived." Still, he cautioned, rebuilding Iraq will take time. The president added that the U.S. will ensure that all Iraqis have a voice in the new government. The president expressed his confidence that a free Iraq can "be an example of peace and prosperity and freedom to the entire Middle East."

 Kuwait is providing humanitarian assistance to Iraq while still hoping to recover its prisoners of war from the 1990 invasion. Kuwaiti relief agencies are providing food and medicine to several Iraqi cities. At the same time, Kuwait wants to step up efforts to locate some 600 prisoners of war it maintains Iraq still has from the 1990 occupation. At presstime one American, Navy pilot Michael Scott Speicher, was still unaccounted for from the 1991 Gulf War. According to Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, the POW issue is one that Kuwait and the U.S. "share as a deep concern and an abiding interest."

 President George W. Bush visited Walter Reed Army Medical Center to thank wounded soldiers for their sacrifices and dedication while taking part in Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan. "I came to thank the troops and their families and their loved ones for their sacrifice. I also want to thank the staff of the hospital, the leadership, the doctors, the nurses and the people who care for those who have been hurt, for their extraordinary service to fellow Americans," said Bush.



PFC James Matise